

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A method for facilitating product development processes within a multi-enterprise environment via a computer network, said multi-enterprise environment including a product development enterprise and at least one customer enterprise, comprising:
 - providing access to a web site of said product development enterprise by said at least one customer enterprise via said computer network;
 - providing access to an account maintained on behalf of said customer enterprise;
 - receiving data inputs pertaining to a product development request, said product development request originating from said customer enterprise;
 - storing said data inputs in a data storage device;
 - extracting said data inputs for review and analysis;
 - establishing a product development plan in response to said review and said analysis;
 - executing said product development plan;
 - wherein said product development enterprise is running a product specification and development application for implementing said product development processes.
2. The method of claim 1, further comprising:
 - receiving data inputs pertaining to said product development plan, wherein said inputs are provided by a research and development organization.
3. The method of claim 1, further comprising:
 - receiving data inputs pertaining to said product development plan, wherein said inputs are provided by a marketing enterprise.
4. The method of claim 2, wherein said inputs provided by said research and development organization include:
 - new process technology;
 - new applications for existing properties of a product or product element; and
 - industry standards pertaining to a product or process.

5. The method of claim 3, wherein said inputs provided by said marketing enterprise include:

new trends in consumer behavior;
economic or market conditions influencing said consumer behavior; and
competitor analyses.

6. The method of claim 1, wherein said data inputs include product specifications.

7. The method of claim 1, wherein said data inputs include product specification changes.

8. The method of claim 1, wherein said data inputs include process technology changes.

9. The method of claim 1, wherein said data inputs are received at a plurality of points throughout a product development cycle.

10. The method of claim 1, wherein said extracting said data inputs occurs at a plurality of points throughout a product development cycle.

11. The method of claim 1, wherein said extracting said data inputs for said review and analysis causes refinements to be made in said product development plan.

12. The method of claim 1, wherein said customer enterprise is a supplier.

13. The method of claim 1, wherein said customer enterprise is a manufacturer.

14. A system for facilitating product development processes within a multi-enterprise environment via a computer network, said multi-enterprise environment including:

a product development enterprise, comprising:

a server located on a host system;

at least one terminal;

a data storage device; and

a network for allowing said host system, said at least one terminal, and said data storage device to communicate;

at least one customer enterprise, comprising:

a server;

at least one terminal;

a network for allowing said terminal and said server to communicate; and

a communications network for allowing said at least one customer enterprise to communicate with said product development enterprise;

wherein said product development enterprise is executing a product specification and development application.

15. The system of claim 14, wherein said product development enterprise:

receives data inputs from said at least one customer enterprise; and

executes said product specification and development application; wherein said data inputs are collected and analyzed by said product specification and development application;

develop and implement a product development plan based upon said results of execution of said product specification and development application.

16. The system of claim 15, wherein said product development plan is refined based upon results of further execution of said product specification and development application.

17. The system of claim 14, wherein said data inputs are received throughout a product development cycle.

18. The system of claim 14, wherein said at least one customer enterprise is a trading partner of said product development enterprise.

19. The system of claim 14, wherein said at least one customer enterprise is a research organization.

20. A storage medium encoded with machine-readable computer program code for facilitating product development processes within a multi-enterprise environment via a computer network, said multi-enterprise environment including a product development enterprise and at least one customer enterprise, the storage medium including instructions for causing a computer to implement a method comprising:

providing access to a web site of said product development enterprise by said at least one customer enterprise via said computer network;

providing access to an account maintained on behalf of said customer enterprise;

receiving data inputs pertaining to a product development request, said product development request originating from said customer enterprise;

storing said data inputs in a data storage device;

extracting said data inputs for review and analysis;

establishing a product development plan in response to said review and said analysis;

executing said product development plan;

wherein said product development enterprise is running a product specification and development application for implementing said product development processes.

21. The storage medium of claim 20, further comprising instructions for causing a computer to implement:

receiving data inputs pertaining to said product development plan, wherein said inputs are provided by a research and development organization.

22. The storage medium of claim 20, further comprising instructions for causing a computer to implement:

receiving data inputs pertaining to said product development plan, wherein said inputs are provided by a marketing enterprise.

23. The storage medium of claim 21, wherein said inputs provided by said research and development organization include:

new process technology;
new applications for existing properties of a product or product element; and
industry standards pertaining to a product or process.

24. The storage medium of claim 22, wherein said inputs provided by said marketing enterprise include:

new trends in consumer behavior;
economic or market conditions influencing said consumer behavior; and
competitor analyses.

25. The storage medium of claim 20, wherein said data inputs include product specifications.

26. The storage medium of claim 20, wherein said data inputs include product specification changes.

27. The storage medium of claim 20, wherein said data inputs include process technology changes.

28. The storage medium of claim 20, wherein said data inputs are received at a plurality of points throughout a product development cycle.

29. The storage medium of claim 20, wherein said extracting said data inputs occurs at a plurality of points throughout a product development cycle.

30. The storage medium of claim 20, wherein said extracting said data inputs for said

review and analysis causes refinements to be made in said product development plan.

31. The storage medium of claim 20, wherein said customer enterprise is a supplier.

32. The storage medium of claim 20, wherein said customer enterprise is a manufacturer.